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THE SELECTION PROCESS  
A Guide for Selecting Agents  
of the  
Civilian Conservation Corps

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Federal Security Agency  
CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS  
Office of the Director  
Washington, D. C.

January 1941





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Office of the Director  
Washington, D. C.

January 1941

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THE SELECTION PROCESS has been prepared by  
The Division of Selection of the Civilian Conservation Corps



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## FOREWORD

The purpose of this book is to provide helpful suggestions to men and women in every county of the United States who are responsible for selecting young men for the Civilian Conservation Corps. It is designed as a companion to the bulletin entitled, "Standards of Eligibility and Selection for Junior Enrollees of the Civilian Conservation Corps," and is to be used only in conjunction with that document. Whereas "Standards of Eligibility and Selection" contains mandatory regulations which must be applied uniformly in the administration of CCC responsibility, by contrast "The Selection Process" contains suggestions as to method to be developed in a manner appropriate to the State or local agency concerned.

Out of the experience and initiative of selecting agents in all parts of the country have come many of the ideas that are contained in this book. The Division of Selection, which prepared this document, wishes to acknowledge its indebtedness to those selecting agents in the various States who have originated and pioneered new methods of operation which are described herein.

It is hoped that this book may be helpful in carrying forward the very important responsibilities in which more than 4,000 State and local CCC selecting agents are engaged.

James J. McEntee



## Chapter I

### THE JOB OF THE SELECTING AGENT

#### The CCC "Personnel Department"

Each CCC selecting agent<sup>1/</sup> is an official representative of the Civilian Conservation Corps. He is a member of that "personnel department" which is concerned with selection of the large working force employed in its camps. He and his 4,000 associates deal with young men in every State and in every county in the country. Selecting a quarter of a million youths from a much larger group of applicants is the annual job of this "personnel department."

The work of CCC selection has many fundamental similarities to the activities of the personnel department of a large business concern. Both the selecting agent and the business personnel director have responsibility for selecting the man-power which carries their enterprises forward. In order to accomplish his work effectively, each must follow a well-recognized procedure.

#### Knowledge of CCC Camp Operations

The first step in that procedure is to obtain a thorough understanding of the purposes of the organization, the requirements of the jobs, and the opportunities for training, employment, advancement, and wage or salary increases. As the business personnel director must know these things about his business, so must the selecting agent know them about the CCC camps - what they do, how they operate, what they require of and offer to the men they employ. The selecting agent uses every possible opportunity to visit the camps and talk with the operating staff - the camp commander, the camp superintendent and the educational adviser. He watches the men at work. He observes living accommodations, training opportunities, and becomes well acquainted with camp regulations and routines. If, as in a few cases, he is located too far away from camps to be able to visit them, he obtains information about the operating phases of the camps through his supervisor and through printed publications. Thus, he becomes well acquainted with the purposes, the requirements and the opportunities of the Civilian Conservation Corps.

#### Informing the Community

The second step which is usually taken by both the business personnel director and the CCC selecting agent is to interpret to the community, especially to that part of the community from which good

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<sup>1/</sup> Hereafter the term "selecting agent" (except in a few instances which are specifically noted) is intended to mean the local selecting agent who actually takes applications, conducts interviews, and exercises judgment as to which applicants are to be certified for enrollment in the Civilian Conservation Corps.

workers are most likely to be drawn, what kind of a company or agency they represent and what are its work opportunities and other advantages. In the case of the Civilian Conservation Corps, the agency is so large and its opportunities are so broad and varied that the selecting agent must use channels of information which will reach the whole community. Only if the community is continuously well informed with regard to the CCC, is the group of applicants likely to be of such caliber that qualitative selection is possible.

### Characteristics of Successful Enrollees

The third step of the procedure which is followed by both the business personnel director and the CCC selecting agent is to seek to discover what characteristics of applicants seem to result in their success as workers on the job. Both in the industrial plant and in CCC camps there are many different kinds of jobs. Some success factors are common to almost all jobs; other success factors apply to specific jobs.

Success factors in industry and success factors in the Civilian Conservation Corps have certain similarities and several very important differences. Both want men who are willing to work hard. Both want men who are willing to follow instructions. Both want men who are physically fit. Industry, however, wants the best trained men it can find, whereas the CCC wants the best youths it can find to train. Specific training is not an entrance requirement for the Civilian Conservation Corps, whereas it frequently is in industry. Adaptability to camp life and group living; adaptability to change in surroundings, change in friends, change in diet, change in habits - these are ordinarily not important factors in hiring men for industry, but they are extremely important if a youth is to be successful in the Civilian Conservation Corps.

Selecting agents can discover success factors in these ways:

1. By keeping careful records on each applicant selected so as to be able to analyze, after discharge, the characteristics which seem to be common to enrollees who have succeeded and those who have failed;
2. By talking with the supervisory personnel in the camps in order to obtain the benefit of their observation, experience and judgment concerning the youths who have worked under them.

### Appraisal of Qualifications

The fourth logical step is to develop a process by which applicants may be appraised in terms of the success factors which have been established (at least on a tentative basis). If the industrial

personnel director determines that absolute integrity is an important characteristic for a group of jobs, he will make extensive investigation of the family, business and community relationships of applicants whom he wishes to employ. He would not think of hiring a man for a job of this kind without verifying the applicant's statements about himself and seeking other significant information. Correspondingly, if the CCC selecting agent concludes that adaptability to a complete change in mode of living is an important characteristic for enrollees, he must follow a similar procedure. He examines and reviews the home, school, employment and community background of each applicant. Again, therefore, we have a close parallel between the work of the selecting agent and that of the business or industrial personnel director.

### Final Selection

After applicants have been evaluated and rated in terms of characteristics which usually result in successful employment or enrollment, the next step is definite selection. This is not a routine process. It is the critical and discriminating decision before employment. Here, the selecting agent and the personnel director sum up and review all the information they have accumulated and exercise careful and impartial judgment in making final selections.

### Progress of Enrollees in Camp

In two other respects the job of the selecting agent parallels that of the business or industrial personnel director. Each has a definite interest in the welfare and progress of the employee or enrollee during his period of employment. Each has certain responsibilities for the men at work which have an important bearing upon the success of the entire enterprise. Progressive personnel departments in industry find that it pays, for example, to provide aid and counsel to workers in solving personal problems. In the Civilian Conservation Corps, one of the responsibilities of the selecting agent is to aid the enrollee to adjust such personal problems as arise in connection with his allotment - which can be changed upon the approval of the State Selecting Agency - or problems which arise because of illness in the family.

### Welfare of Former Enrollees

In addition to an interest in the welfare of the worker during his term of employment, personnel representatives have an increasing concern for the welfare of the worker for at least a temporary period after his employment is terminated. In the industrial field, the worker who is not immediately reemployed receives unemployment compensation for a period of time, a portion of which comes from funds contributed by his former employer. In the Civilian Conservation Corps, when a man is discharged and is not immediately reemployed, he may come to the selecting agent for advice and counsel. Selecting agents are increasingly realizing that they have opportunity and responsibility

for "post-camp guidance" of youths who have returned to their home communities and have not been able to find employment. Such guidance ordinarily does not need to be extensive. But it is nonetheless important.

It is evident that although there are essential differences in certain qualifications desired by industry and those desired by the Civilian Conservation Corps, there is a close parallel between the work of the business or industrial personnel director and that of the CCC selecting agent. Each is definitely a personnel representative of his organization.

As a personnel representative of the Civilian Conservation Corps, therefore, the selecting agent's job may be summarized briefly under the following general headings:

1. To obtain thorough understanding of the purposes of the CCC, the nature and requirements of enrollee jobs (including all of camp life), and opportunities for training, employment and advancement.
2. To inform the community of the purposes, the requirements and the opportunities of the Civilian Conservation Corps and interpret the program in such manner as to enlist the interest of the maximum number of qualified applicants.
3. To seek to discover what characteristics of applicants influence, or determine, their success as enrollees.
4. To develop and apply a process of appraising applicants in terms of the success factors established.
5. To make final selections based upon careful review of all the facts available, plus the use of discriminating judgment.
6. To have concern for the welfare and progress of enrollees in camp, and to provide such service functions on their behalf as are necessary and desirable.
7. To assist enrollees to readjust themselves to their home communities, including useful suggestions concerning their search for suitable employment.

Since it is the purpose of this book to provide helpful suggestions to selecting agents about the specific methods by which they may most effectively and easily accomplish their work, its content is arranged in exactly the order indicated in this list of responsibilities.

## Chapter II

### THE PURPOSES, NATURE AND OPPORTUNITIES OF THE CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS

#### Purposes

The Civilian Conservation Corps is a program of work, experience and training for young men.<sup>2/</sup> The CCC law states:

".....there is hereby established the Civilian Conservation Corps, hereinafter called the Corps, for the purpose of providing employment as well as vocational training for youthful citizens of the United States who are unemployed and in need of employment,.....through the performance of useful public work in connection with the conservation and development of the natural resources of the United States, its territories and insular possessions....."

The projects which engage CCC youths from every State in the country represent some of the most important undertakings of the Federal Government. Their justification is clear-cut and farsighted. It is to save the natural resources of the United States and to develop them both for the benefit of this generation and for future generations; it is to reduce the hazards of floods and forest fires which yearly destroy life and property in many sections of the country; it is to demonstrate to farmers how to retain the top soil of the land so that it will not be washed down rivers or blown away - these examples are typical of the conservation purposes of the Corps.

#### National Defense

New emphasis has been added in the year 1940 to the purposes of developing and conserving our human and natural resources. The expanded program for national defense gave rise to a discussion of the proper function of the Civilian Conservation Corps in aiding the nation to supply its various defense needs. Decision on this matter was reached by Congress with the enactment on June 26, 1940, of Public Resolution - No. 88 - 76th Congress, which contained the following section:

"Sec. 38. Notwithstanding the provisions of any other law, the President is authorized, in his discretion, and under such regulations as he may prescribe, to provide within the

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<sup>2/</sup> Approximately 10% of the enrolled members of the Civilian Conservation Corps are war veterans. These men are, of course, older than the "junior enrollees" and are housed in separate camps. While the work projects are similar, the program of training is quite different. The enrollment of these men does not alter the fact that the Corps is essentially a program for young men.

Civilian Conservation Corps such training of enrollees therein in noncombatant subjects essential to the operations of the military and naval establishments as he considers may contribute materially to the interests of the national defense. Such subjects may include, but are not restricted to, cooking, baking, first aid to the injured, operation and maintenance of motor vehicles, road and bridge construction and maintenance, photography, signal communications, and other matters incident to the successful conduct of military and naval activities: Provided, That the appropriations under the heading "Civilian Conservation Corps" contained in the Federal Security Agency Appropriation Act, 1941, shall be available for carrying out the purposes of this section, and the limitations and conditions on the expenditure of such funds are hereby waived to the extent necessary to accomplish the purposes of this section: Provided further, That no person shall be excluded from the training program authorized by this section on account of race, color, or creed.

It is clear that the mandate of Congress is to continue the existing basic CCC program, giving emphasis to those types of vocational training which have direct applicability to national defense needs. The Corps is now embarked upon an expansion and improvement of its vocational training program in accordance with the desires of Congress and the President.

#### A Community by Itself

Every camp is a small community of approximately 200 men. There are many different types of jobs, some of which are very similar to the various jobs in other American communities. The CCC "town" has a store, usually a small newspaper, a library, a school building, a community dining room ("mess hall") for which the CCC members do the cooking and take care of the kitchen, a recreation hall, athletic contests, a small hospital, and facilities for adapting the camp assembly room as a "church" for religious worship. Under general supervision, the young men operate all of these community activities. The conduct of these activities is the first opportunity of most young men of the CCC to assume social or business responsibilities.

#### Camp Life

Camp life means living in barracks with thirty to forty other youths. It means eating the same food as is prepared for the other 199 enrollees. It means getting up early in the morning - usually about 6 a.m. It means following certain routines, such as making the beds and cleaning the barracks every morning before work. It means going to work on schedule every day. There are certain essential restrictions on individual freedom. Enrollees cannot leave camp except by permission. They are not permitted to own automobiles. Camp life is

very different from the kind of life to which many enrollees are accustomed. It is essential that enrollees should understand this fact and be adaptable to the change.

### Conservation Work

To achieve its conservation purposes, the Corps must build roads through forests, plant trees on burned over and cut over areas, construct bridges and build dams. Farms must be redesigned, fences moved, fields relocated, and terracing done. On the two billion acres of land in the United States, there are hundreds of camps working steadily to demonstrate how to control the waste of natural resources (especially lands and forests), which has been going on during the past two centuries.

Following is a partial list of CCC jobs:

Auto mechanics	Road-grader operation
Bridge construction	Sawmill operation
Bulldozer operation	Sign painting and sign making
Cabin construction	Small dam construction
Carpentry	Steam-shovel operation
Concrete construction	Stone masonry
Cooking	Store clerking
Diesel-engine operation	Surveying
Drafting	Telephone-line construction
Hospital orderly	Tool sharpening
Jackhammer operation	Tractor operation
Landscaping	Tree-nursery work
Logging	Truck driving
Office work	Welding
Road and trail construction	Wildlife management

Not all of these jobs are available in any one camp. Many of them, however, are available in every camp. After demonstrating their ability as workmen for a period of six months or a year, ambitious enrollees are frequently transferred to another camp in order to obtain work experience which is more suitable to their abilities and interests.

Each camp has a leisure time program of education and training. Some enrollees complete their grade school or high school educations. Others participate in special short-unit courses of information and instruction related to their interests and abilities. Most enrollees obtain additional training which has direct relationship to the work they are doing in camp.

## Opportunity

It would be difficult to conceive of opportunities for experience and training which promote the national welfare and at the same time advance the growth of young men to the degree that is afforded by the vital conservation projects of the Civilian Conservation Corps. Certainly the opportunity to acquire experience and skill are two of the most important considerations which impel youths to make application for CCC enrollment. Likewise, of course, youths are interested in being employed and earning money. These are obvious and important opportunities of CCC enrollment.

Somewhat less publicized, but nonetheless real, are the following additional opportunities for personal growth:

Health: The CCC builds strong, healthy, vigorous young men whose resistance to disease and other ailments is greatly increased. These youths gain essential physical assets at an early age, when they are most susceptible to physical development, and when vigorous health will prove of most enduring value.

Discipline: The discipline and regularity of camp life is very frequently spoken of by the enrollees themselves as they look back upon their camp experience as one of the most effective contributions to their habits and character. Regular hours, definite responsibilities, adequate sleep, and three square meals a day - these new experiences are a revelation to the members of the Corps of the additional energy and assurance which springs from regularity of life and work.

Personal Appearance: Neatness and cleanliness, and a knowledge of personal hygiene are a part of the program from which no enrollee can fail to benefit. No quality is likely to receive more favorable comment and attention when the enrollee returns to his home community.

Tolerance: Living together in barracks with nearly two hundred other young men frequently has a most desirable effect in teaching enrollees to respect the rights of others and to be tolerant of the other fellow's point of view. It also teaches them to be good sports, to take minor defeats without flinching - traits of character which will stand them in good stead later in life.

Family Support: In many cases the shouldering of the obligation of providing a major part of the family income develops a sense of responsibility within these young men, most of whom have never known what it is to feel the satisfaction of self-support and the self-assurance of being of assistance and value to others.

Self-reliance: Self-reliance and a brighter, broader outlook on life go hand in hand as among the most important contributions of the CCC program. Fear is replaced by assurance and discouragement by ambition.

It is believed that if these opportunities for personal growth were more widely publicized and understood, they would add greatly to the impelling motives which cause young men to seek enrollment in the Corps. Selecting agents can aid greatly in interpreting these opportunities to their communities.

### Camp Visits

It is impossible within the space of this chapter to discuss in detail the nature of CCC camp life and the multitude of opportunities available to ambitious youths who are enrolled in the Corps. By far, the best means for selecting agents to become acquainted with CCC camp operations and opportunities is to visit nearby camps at every opportunity. The camp commander, the project superintendent and the educational adviser will gladly welcome any selecting agent and will give all possible aid and assistance in providing full information concerning the camps.

If, as in a few cases, it is not possible for selecting agents to visit camps because of distance, the State Supervisor of CCC Selection can usually provide, either personally or through informational publications, more detailed information about CCC camp life and opportunities.

VISIT CCC CAMPS AT EVERY OPPORTUNITY!

## Chapter III

### INFORMATION AND INTERPRETATION

Knowledge by the public about the purposes and requirements of the Corps is fundamental to the work of selecting agents. Eligible young men in every community should know about the opportunities which exist in CCC camps. They should not suffer exclusion from selection merely because of lack of information concerning the experience and training available through enrollment in the Corps.

Some of the means by which information may be made available to interested persons are:

Newspapers: News concerning a forthcoming, current, or past enrollment; pictures of enrollees leaving for camp; success stories concerning local enrollees. Newspapers will ordinarily be eager to obtain material of this kind because it has legitimate news value.

Radio: Announcements of enrollments; descriptions of the work of the CCC in the community or area.

Posters and Exhibits: Posters which describe the work, the eligibility requirements and the opportunities of the Civilian Conservation Corps are helpful in Community Houses, YMCA's, and appropriate public buildings.

"Open House" Inspections of Nearby CCC Camps: Camp officials are very willing to cooperate in setting aside a suitable time when the public may come and view the operation of a CCC camp. When a camp is in the immediate vicinity, prospective applicants and their families should especially be urged to take advantage of this opportunity to see a camp in operation.

Letters, Post Cards and Informational Leaflets: These are valuable devices in many communities for reaching prospective applicants who are not likely to be reached in other ways.

Programs and Talks before Local Groups: Organizations and groups having an interest in young persons will frequently be of real aid and service to selecting agencies in advancing understanding of the CCC program. Talks to such groups are an effective informational device. Programs or talks by enrollees or the supervisory personnel of nearby camps at local meetings of Rotary, Kiwanis and similar organizations may likewise be excellent means for developing broad community understanding of the work of the CCC. Many times these are arranged by selecting agents.

Use of Reception Room for Information Purposes: The reception room of the CCC selecting agency (which usually handles other welfare activities) is frequently an excellent place in which to provide information on the Civilian Conservation Corps to persons who come to the local office. Not only is it a place where prospective applicants may see pictures and obtain information about the CCC program of work and training, but it may also be the means whereby the parents and even the neighbors of prospective applicants learn about the Corps. (Further reference to the desirability of making good use of the reception room is contained in the chapter on "The Application.")

Working Relationships with Employment Offices: Use of the Junior Placement Service of the local Employment Office is, when available, a helpful means of spreading information and of securing desirable applications. Close cooperation between selecting agents and Employment Service representatives may frequently be very effective. It is particularly helpful, for example, as CCC enrollees return to their home communities after leaving the Corps. (See Chapter XIII.)

Most of the above methods may be adapted by selecting agents in providing advance information to inquiring applicants and members of their families. Officials of nearby camps, besides being glad to receive visitors, are always glad to furnish information about their camps and the particular work projects on which they are engaged.

## Chapter IV

### CHARACTERISTICS OF SUCCESSFUL ENROLLEES

Before any thoughtful selecting agent attempts to appraise and select applicants for CCC enrollment, he seeks to discover what characteristics of applicants seem to make probable their success in the Corps. Determining and evaluating characteristics which contribute to successful CCC enrollment is one of the most difficult but clearly one of the most important responsibilities which rests upon each selecting agent. It is a difficult responsibility because it deals with personal qualities and depends upon human judgment. It is necessary, therefore, for selecting agents to educate and implement their own judgments.

To determine whether an applicant is personally well fitted for the requirements and opportunities of camp life, a selecting agent must have established for himself a set of criteria. He must have in mind a group of personal qualities or characteristics which seem ordinarily to result in successful enrollment in the Corps. Many selecting agents have individually listed these factors for their own use. Out of their experience comes a suggestive list of these characteristics. It is by no means a final list. It will serve its purpose well if it acts as a core around which the selecting agent will develop from his own experience a group of personal characteristics which seem to result in success in CCC enrollment.

Four characteristics are advanced and described below. The order in which these items are set forth has no special significance.

#### Maturity

Applicants who are reasonably mature, both physically and socially, usually make the quicker and more satisfactory adjustment to CCC camp life. It is to be remembered that the largest number of discharges because of desertion occur during the first weeks of enrollment. Camp commanders and selecting agents are agreed that these desertions are usually due to "homesickness" and immaturity.

Maturity cannot well be judged by age alone. A selecting agent may immediately recognize that a particular 17 year old youth is more mature than another 19 year old applicant. It is to be judged in large measure by the mental outlook of the youth. Extreme timidity may be a sign of immaturity. Indications of unusual dependence upon parents often reflects immaturity. Total lack of serious demeanor may likewise show that the youth is immature.

Obviously a youth should be physically able to do vigorous outdoor work in order to merit selection. In this connection it is important to differentiate between a youth whose underweight is due

to malnutrition, and a youth who is underweight for other reasons. The former can be expected to gain weight and strength rapidly in a CCC camp; the latter ordinarily cannot.

### Dependability

A youth who can be depended upon, when his superiors are not watching him, to abide by the spirit of camp regulations and policies, is an asset in a CCC camp. This means that he must be a willing worker. A youth who is not a willing worker harms not only himself but others in the camp.

The enrollee must be worthy to be trusted with Government property. He must have a sense of the ordinary moral concepts of right and wrong. He must be willing to subordinate his own desires for freedom of action and movement to the restrictions which CCC camps must impose.

These traits, which have been grouped for convenience under the heading "Dependability," are believed to be important characteristics for youths who aspire to success in a CCC camp - and elsewhere.

How is it possible to discover whether a youth is dependable or not? Can it be done through an interview? Only partially. It is sometimes possible, for example, to discover through interview and subsequent verification, when an applicant has not been honest. It is not uncommon for a selecting agent to become uncertain about a youth who is excessively self-assured, or "cocky." It is often desirable, when such characteristics are noted, to make a very careful verification of the background of the applicant. His school record, information from private social agencies, other public agencies, and even neighbors and associates will give a clearer picture of the true characteristics than can be determined in an interview.

Previous conduct which shows a strong habit of going off at a tangent from the groups with which the applicant has lived and associated, such as his family, school, etc., and an unwillingness to abide by usual standards and rules of conduct, ordinarily indicate lack of dependability in an applicant. All of the information that can possibly be obtained about an applicant's background will help the selecting agent to arrive at a final judgment as to the applicant's dependability.

It is an important fact that compulsion is not the basis for CCC discipline. When boys are not willing to accept the rules of conduct necessary in a CCC camp, they either desert or are discharged for misconduct. In doing so, they may cause several other boys to desert or be discharged in a similar manner. It is very clear, therefore, that selecting agents cannot select for enrollment youths who "need reforming" or who "need to be disciplined" and expect such youths to

remain long in camp. Each youth who is selected for enrollment should understand what it means to follow the rules of a social group and be willing to do so.

### Mental Alertness

Mental alertness, as used here, means the possession of reasonable mental capacity. The Corps is not interested in selecting brilliant or highly educated youths. Neither is it interested in selecting youths whose mental capacities are not sufficient to enable them to learn to follow instructions and to do some job reasonably well.

Schooling: The number of years of schooling completed by a youth is no certain criterion of mental alertness. For example: A selecting agent may have two applicants, the first of whom has completed only three grades of school and the second of whom is reported to have completed four grades of school. The first youth dropped out of school when he was nine or ten - he went to school for three years and no longer. He demonstrates, however, that he can read as well as most fifth or sixth grade children and shows himself to be wide awake and with reasonably good mental equipment. The second youth went to school for eight years in order to complete four grades of school. He appears to have difficulty in signing his name or in writing the most common and simple words. His physical coordination appears to be poor. He does not seem to have the mental capacity to understand and follow simple instructions. As between the two youths, the Civilian Conservation Corps will clearly benefit the first youth more. The fact that he has less formal schooling should not act to his disadvantage in CCC selection.

Low mentality: Youths with extremely limited mental capacity often become real problems in a CCC camp. They may be safety hazards to themselves and to other enrollees. If given an axe, they may chop their own feet or hit another enrollee simply because of poor physical coordination or lack of reasonable understanding of the necessity for being careful. One such enrollee thought "it would be funny" to push another enrollee off a truck, with the result that the youth who was pushed off was very seriously injured. Safety alone demands that applicants with very limited mental capacity should not be selected for CCC enrollment.

Superior ability: At the other end of the scale, youths with very superior mental capacity who have an obvious desire to obtain further schooling or college training should be encouraged to explore all possibilities for obtaining further formal education before seeking enrollment in the Civilian Conservation Corps. The NYA high school and college student-aid program may be of help to them; scholarships may offer opportunities; part-time employment may sustain them while continuing their schooling. Such applicants

should ordinarily not turn to the Corps until it has become clear that CCC camp life is without question the most suitable opportunity for them.

### Interest in CCC as a Work and Training Opportunity

The Civilian Conservation Corps is not primarily a relief program; it is a work and training opportunity for young men. It is important, therefore, that applicants should understand the nature of the CCC program and should not be selected for enrollment if they are unable to regard it as a work and training opportunity. The following examples will illustrate this point:

Example 1. In one agency a youth made application for enrollment but did not seem too enthusiastic about being enrolled. Since he seemed qualified from such standpoints as mental capacity, dependability, and maturity, and in view of the fact that his family was in need of relief, the selecting agent decided to "take a chance" with him. Two months later the boy deserted. The selecting agent sent him a post card and asked him to come in. By careful interview the selecting agent learned that the youth had gone to camp because his family had strongly urged him to do so. He, himself, was not anxious to go to camp. Later, the father of the youth got a job and could support his family again, so the youth took that first opportunity to leave. To that youth and to his family the CCC program was only a relief measure. He had no interest in the Corps as a work and training opportunity. It is not surprising, therefore, that his enrollment resulted in desertion.

Example 2. In another instance, a group of young men appeared at a CCC selecting agent's office and all wanted to make application. The selecting agent noticed that they were all older and more experienced than most youths who made application for CCC enrollment. He discovered that they were normally employed in a local steel mill. Most of them had been earning approximately \$5 per day until they had been furloughed in a slack season. They decided, as a group, that until the steel mills picked up again, they would all join the CCC. These young men were mature, dependable, mentally alert. They were selected and enrolled in the CCC. Within three months, the mills opened up again and immediately they were re-employed at their old jobs. As enrollees of the Corps, they did not take any special interest in the work; they did not participate in the voluntary leisure-time training program; they were merely "marking time" until the mills opened up again and they could get their old jobs back. They received more cash on their former jobs in a week than they did in a CCC camp in a month. They considered that the work was beneath them. Their enrollment in the Corps was clearly not successful.

These are two examples of poor selection because the applicants were not interested in the CCC as a work and training opportunity. No youth who has been urged against his own desires to make application,

and no applicant who regards the CCC as a mere stop-gap or a vacation, is likely to make a good enrollee.

Discouragement: It should be pointed out in this connection that an air of discouragement displayed by the applicant is not to be interpreted by the selecting agent as lack of ambition or lack of interest in the Corps as a work and training opportunity. Not infrequently, discouragement is a sign of frustrated ambition which needs only opportunity to be awakened. Youths who have become discouraged by long and intensive search for employment, frequently make as much progress as those who seem more self-assured. A discouraged youth, who becomes a CCC applicant, if he has no natural handicaps, usually has more possibilities than an apathetic one.

### The Key to Careful Selection

These, then, are among the characteristics which seem to result in successful enrollment in the Corps:

1. Maturity
2. Dependability
3. Mental alertness
4. Interest in the Corps as a work and training opportunity

The selecting agent with genuine interest in the challenge of making maximum use of the Corps as a resource for young men will seek to expand this list through his own close observation and study. He will pass on to his associates and superiors such suggestions as seem to him valid and which meet the test of experience.

In the chapters on "Interview," "Home Visits," "Verification," and "Qualitative Selection," effort will be made to suggest how the selection process can make use of these criteria of success in arriving at final determination of the applicants who shall be awarded "scholarships in work experience."

## Chapter V

### THE APPLICATION

#### The Applicant's First Impression

The first impression which the youth receives when he visits the selecting agency to make application may have much influence upon his future attitude toward the Corps. It is of real importance, therefore, that on his first visit each applicant should feel that he has come to apply for a man's job and that the process of getting it is an orderly and business-like procedure.

Many selecting agencies have given special attention to the reception of applicants. The reception room in which applicants must wait to be interviewed can usually be made, regardless of its physical limitations, a place in which applicants can increase their knowledge of and interest in the CCC program. A bulletin board with pictures or posters of camp activities will capture attention. A prominent listing of eligibility requirements will enable many applicants to determine for themselves whether they are eligible. If they are obviously ineligible (as, for example, on account of age), they may eliminate themselves without taking up the time of an interviewer.

Written information about the Corps is available in various forms suitable for use in reception rooms. The weekly CCC newspaper "Happy Days"<sup>3/</sup> is excellent reading material for applicants who are waiting. Other kinds of suitable information can frequently be suggested or supplied by the State CCC Selecting Agency.

Under all except the most unusual circumstances, selecting agencies can so arrange matters that prospective CCC applicants will have opportunity to secure an application blank, or, at least, to put their names on the list of interested applicants on any day when the selecting agency is in normal operation. To tell an applicant who has travelled a number of miles that "We are not taking applications today" is bewildering and disappointing to him. A register of names in the form of a card file is the device ordinarily used by selecting agents for recording brief essential data regarding applicants who express an interest in CCC enrollment and who are not immediately interviewed.

Psychologically it seems desirable to place as much of the "burden of proof" upon the CCC applicant to reveal his qualifications for enrollment as can reasonably be done. As applicants for jobs in private industry, these same youths (who now wish to be enrolled in

<sup>3/</sup> Published by the Happy Days Publishing Company,  
Washington News Building, Washington, D. C.

CCC camps) will need to be able to describe their abilities and their experience, and usually to list upon an application the essential facts about themselves. It is very appropriate, therefore, that the process of making application for the Corps should be a step in their training in the business of applying for work. Such training may begin by requiring each youth who is able to read and write to fill out a CCC application to the best of his ability.

In the event that the applicant does not appear to be able to read or write, it is not suggested that he be given an application form. There is no advantage when the application is filled out by a friend on behalf of the applicant. If it is not convenient to interview him then and there, the notation of his name and address and an explanation that he will be called in for interview at a later time is the better procedure.

## Chapter VI

### THE INTERVIEW

Ordinarily the appointment for interview is made by post card. The applicant is advised to come to the selecting agency office at a specified time. He is instructed on the post card to bring with him, if he has not already done so, his application blank and his age verification.

It is important that the appointments be so arranged that applicants will have to wait as short a time as possible. There should be places to sit down for applicants who must wait. It is well known that almost any applicant who has had to stand and wait for a considerable period of time is likely to be tired and nervous and unable to do justice to himself in the interview.

#### General Principles

Many CCC applicants, as the result of vain search for employment, may be quite discouraged. It is the job of the interviewer to uncover what lies beneath the discouragement. Each applicant must be put at ease in an interview. If it is at all possible to arrange it, the interview should be conducted in private. No other factor, except the apparent personal and sympathetic interest of the interviewer, is quite so important or quite so conducive to putting the applicant at ease as is privacy. Likewise, it is important to reduce distractions to a minimum; distractions which arise from disturbing noises; distractions which arise from objects in the room which may arouse the curiosity of the applicant.

The skilled interviewer will always set an example to the young man he is interviewing by demonstrating what is meant by being relaxed and composed. The applicant should be encouraged to think that he has perfect freedom to say anything about his background, experience, and interests which may have a bearing upon his application for the Civilian Conservation Corps. The interviewer will not allow the applicant to take up a great deal of time by random talking; the process, however, is not that of cutting the applicant short, but of diplomatically redirecting the course of his conversation.

The process of the interview has three purposes:

1. To make certain that the applicant understands enough about the CCC program so that he may feel sure in his own mind that it is the kind of opportunity he is anxious to obtain.
2. To determine whether the applicant meets the legal and administrative eligibility regulations of the Corps.

3. To determine the personal fitness and adaptability of the applicant for the work and training program of the Corps.

#### How Much Does Applicant Know About CCC?

It is desirable early in the interview to find out how much the applicant knows about CCC camps. Where did he obtain his knowledge? Does he know enough about the program to feel assured that it is the kind of opportunity he desires? Has the applicant ever visited a camp? Has he ever had a brother in camp? This part of the interview process has real value in determining whether the Civilian Conservation Corps is the most suitable work and training resource for the applicant.

The applicant frequently has only a vague or hearsay impression of the Corps. It is important, both in the interest of the applicant himself and of the Corps, that the applicant should be informed sufficiently of the nature and requirements of CCC life. There should be no likelihood that, after he has enrolled in the program, he will find that it is entirely different than he had expected. It is the responsibility of the selecting agent, therefore, to see that each applicant has a true general picture of the Corps. In order to do this, the selecting agent must, of course, have a thorough understanding of CCC camp life, usually obtained through camp visits and first hand observation of camp life and work.

#### Adaptability to Camp Life

It is clearly of great importance that the primary approach of the selecting agent in every interview should be an attempt to discover the suitability of the applicant for camp life and the suitability of camp life for him. If interviews are conducted with this purpose in mind, the attitude of the applicant toward the whole Civilian Conservation Corps will be inestimably better than as if the selecting agent were to start out by attempting to discover the financial need of the applicant's family for the allotment which might be provided if he were enrolled. Likewise, it is important that the interview should be conducted in this manner if the selecting agent is to perform his function as a personnel representative of the Civilian Conservation Corps.

#### Is Applicant Fully Eligible?

The interview is, of course, the principal means of determining whether the applicant meets the legal and administrative eligibility regulations contained in "Standards of Eligibility and Selection." The process by which this is done is ordinarily to review with the applicant the statements which he himself has made in filling out the CCC "Application" (see Appendix A). If some of the answers to the questions are omitted, the interviewer will naturally ask the questions of the applicant orally in the interview. The interviewer can often learn a great deal about the applicant by requesting him to complete

each unanswered question in his own handwriting on the application, in the presence of the interviewer. This is done, of course, after an oral discussion of the proper answers to be given. Any marked difference in handwriting between the questions answered in this manner and the remainder of the application may be noted immediately by the interviewer.

All of the questions necessary to determine whether an applicant meets the legal and administrative eligibility requirements are contained on the "Application," Form CCC-S209 (see Appendix A). Much of the information given by the applicant will ordinarily need subsequent verification. A later chapter deals in detail with methods of verifying the facts of eligibility. As is pointed out in the chapter "Verification of Eligibility," accuracy as to the facts of eligibility is of unusually great importance in CCC selection, especially because the initial expense of selecting, examining, transporting and equipping these young men is very great. Mistakes may be extremely costly, both in human and financial terms.

### Character and Fitness

The interview is the most important means by which the selecting agent appraises the personal fitness of the applicant for enrollment in the Corps. No rules or regulations could possibly be made which would serve as a substitute for the exercise of discriminating judgment on the part of the selecting agent. Appraisal of each applicant in terms of the qualities which will cause him to remain in the Corps for at least one full six months' term, do his share of the work, and profit by the training program is the most difficult and the most challenging job of each selecting agent.

In Chapter IV, entitled "Characteristics of Successful Enrollees," attempt is made to suggest some of the personal qualities which selecting agents in various parts of the country have found important in making selections of young men. There were four such qualities mentioned in that chapter: dependability, maturity, mental alertness and interest in the Corps as a work and training opportunity. These qualities, together with such others as each selecting agent adds to his own list of "characteristics of successful enrollees" should naturally be clearly in mind as each applicant is interviewed. The specific method by which the selecting agent makes his appraisal of young men must be developed individually. Some helpful suggestions may be made, however.

### Careful Judgment

The interviewer may refine his own judgments by making his appraisals in as specific terms as possible. In deciding whether a youth has sufficient mental capacity to be considered for CCC enrollment the selecting agent does not ask himself the single question,

"Is this boy mentally alert?" Instead, he refines his own observations of the youth by asking himself a number of questions, such as the following:

1. Will this youth be able to follow instructions for doing work such as planting or transplanting trees, building fences, and similar activities?
2. Does this youth have enough "common sense" to become a safe worker? Would he handle an axe and other sharp tools without hurting himself or others?
3. Does this youth seem to have the capacity and interest to learn to do one of the various CCC jobs reasonably well? Does he have the capacity and interest to profit by supplementary classroom instruction?
4. Was this young man unusually retarded in school? For what reason?

These are some of the questions which the selecting agent will ask himself in appraising the mental alertness of each youth. Other detailed questions will permit selecting agents to refine their judgments in appraising dependability, maturity and interest in the Corps as a work and training opportunity.

## Chapter VII

### THE HOME VISIT

#### Purposes

The home visit is an extension of the applicant's interview. It does not have as its sole purpose the determination of the financial status of the family. It has also the same three purposes as the interview, namely: (1) to make sure that the parents or allottee understand the nature of the CCC program, (2) to determine whether the applicant meets the legal and administrative eligibility regulations of the Corps, and (3) to determine the personal fitness and adaptability of the applicant.

#### Family Influence Upon CCC Enrollee

It is almost as important to give to the parents of applicants information about the nature of CCC camp experience and the rules and regulations by which CCC enrollees must abide, as it is to supply such facts to the applicant himself. The cooperation of the fathers and mothers of enrollees with their sons, their first employment venture, and their first prolonged trip away from home, is naturally a powerful and helpful influence upon the attitude of the young men in camp. The wise selecting agent will stimulate that interest and cooperation among the parents or allottees of all the youths he selects. He will tell the parents enough of the rules and regulations of camp life so that, if their son, in less than six months, comes home to stay with no apparent excuse, they will know that he is either AWOL or has been administratively or dishonorably discharged. They will encourage him to return to camp, if he is absent without leave, and complete his term of enrollment. The parents will not return allotment money to the enrollee in camp. They will write letters and help keep his spirits up. They will encourage him to take advantage of every opportunity for experience and training in camp. They will want him to get the most out of CCC camp life.

#### Verification of Facts of Eligibility

Part of the purpose of a home visit or interview with the parents is to verify the facts as given by the applicant and to determine the eligibility of the proposed allottee to receive the monthly allotment payments. In the event that the applicant is present at the time of the visit or interview, and, indeed, in any event, it is important that the questioning be done in such a way that no one feels that doubt and suspicion are cast upon the applicant's statements. The interview and home visit, when conducted in a friendly manner, will produce virtually all the information necessary. It can be obtained without an "inquisition." Good spirit and manner on the part of the interviewer are more important than adroit phraseology.

### Personal Fitness of Applicant

Finally, the home visit should be the means for determining something of the personal fitness of the applicant for enrollment in the Corps. The line of questioning should attempt to determine whether the parents want their son to go to camp. If so, why? Did he have a hard time adjusting himself to school? How does he occupy his time? Has he had any special difficulties? These are some of the questions that will elicit the type of information which should be obtained from a home visit or interview with the parents or allottee of each applicant.

### Naming of Allottee

Through the home visit the selecting agent will be able to observe home conditions which may have a bearing upon the probable stability of the enrollee in camp. If it appears that there will be family friction over the use of allotment money, selection should not be made unless and until that friction can be reduced or removed. That is the sort of thing which may result in a dissatisfied enrollee and a desertion from camp.

### Unusually Poor Environments

Likewise, the selecting agent must be unusually careful in the case of applicants who have grown up in an atmosphere of irresponsibility or strife. Such home conditions indicate the desirability of interviewing and counselling with applicants much more thoroughly than is necessary where the environment has been more wholesome. Where marked irresponsibility on the part of the applicant is indicated, the selecting agent will normally not select that applicant.

### Joint Responsibility of Applicant and Family

Through the home visit the selecting agent seeks to assure himself that the youthful applicant is going to be able to make a good adjustment to camp life and stay in camp for at least six months. Not only, however, does the selecting agent seek to assure himself of the stability of the prospective enrollee; he impresses the importance of that stability very forcibly upon the applicant himself and his family. There is little likelihood of the enrollee's deserting if his responsibility for remaining a full six months' period of enrollment is deeply and clearly impressed upon him and his family together, so that there can be no possibility of misunderstanding.

## Chapter VIII

### VERIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY

#### Importance of Verification

Verifying the facts of eligibility is most important. When the camp commanding officer discovers, for example, that an enrollee who has been selected and certified as seventeen years old is, in fact, only sixteen, he must, under the CCC law and regulations, discharge that youth. When it is necessary to discharge a youth under this or any circumstance, there are three unfortunate results:

1. The expensive process of examining, transporting, equipping, feeding and housing the youth has all been wasted. The amount of waste incurred by the U. S. Government is from \$25 to \$125 per enrollee wrongly selected, depending upon the distance the enrollee is transported by train to camp.
2. The psychological effect upon the youth is not at all good. It is a mistake and a defeat at a time in his life when success is of great importance. One of the purposes of the Corps is to build self-confidence, not to shatter it.
3. When an enrollee is discharged for erroneous enrollment, a vacancy is left which cannot be filled until the next enrollment period. Ordinarily, therefore, every erroneous enrollment deprives a qualified applicant from obtaining the opportunities and advantages of the Corps for a period of three months. It deprives the community of the value of the enrollment of one of its members, including the value of the allotment to a family.

#### Sources of Information

##### Age (17 to 23 $\frac{1}{2}$ ):

Birth certificate	Family records
Transcript of birth record	Hospital records
Church records	Insurance policies or records
School records	Physicians records
Bible records	

Citizenship: Determine place of birth. (This can usually be done in conjunction with the verification of age, and by the same methods.) If born in the United States, applicant has citizenship status; if born outside the United States, naturalization papers or proof of American citizenship status is necessary.

Marital Status: Selecting agents should satisfy themselves through careful interviewing of each applicant and his parents or allottee that he is unmarried. In some instances, further interviewing of neighbors or other persons acquainted with the applicant will be desirable. In case of doubt, a check with official marriage records of the community may be desirable.

Not in regular attendance at school or on vacation from school: Verify through principal of school last attended, County School Superintendent, or other school authorities.

In good physical condition: Observe the physical condition of each applicant very carefully during interview. If there is doubt about his physical fitness, the selecting agent may be able to arrange for a preliminary physical examination.

In some States and communities, selecting agencies have developed cooperative working arrangements with local health authorities or private physicians who make preliminary physical examination of all applicants considered for selection. This serves as a check upon the observation of the selecting agent; it makes possible minor corrections before the date of official examination by CCC doctors for acceptance into the Corps; it assures the local agents that they are sending forward physically fit young men, few of whom, if any, will be rejected for physical reasons at the CCC acceptance station.

Not on probation or parole; has never been convicted of an offense punishable by death or a term exceeding one year: Verify through court records.

The interview with each applicant and his parents or allottee should be carefully planned to bring out, any previous involvements with police or court authorities. Relationships with schools and community organizations may be explored to advantage in determining these facts.

Not a law enforcement officer: Verify through local law enforcement authorities such as police, sheriff, Justice of the Peace.

Not a member of the National Guard: Verify through Commanding officer of local National Guard unit.

Previous service: Verify through:  
CCC records of the local selecting agency.  
Discharge certificate or certificates of the applicant.  
Correspondence with State CCC Selecting Agency office.

Dependents: If an applicant indicates that he has dependents, he must make an allotment to them, as provided by law. If he claims to have no dependents, it is important that his statements be checked and double checked carefully.

In selecting youthful applicants for the Corps, each local agent acts as a representative of the United States Government in carrying out the provisions of the CCC law and the administrative regulations issued pursuant thereto. Care and accuracy in verifying the facts of eligibility are definite legal duties of all local agents which must be accomplished before final selection and certification are accomplished.

VERIFY THE FACTS OF ELIGIBILITY CAREFULLY!

## Chapter IX

### QUALITATIVE SELECTION

The final determination of the applicants to be awarded the privilege of enrollment in the Civilian Conservation Corps is much more than a routine procedure. No formula can be constructed which will relieve the selecting agent of the important responsibility of exercising discriminating judgment with regard to the personal qualifications of applicants.

As is indicated in Chapter IV of this book, the Corps wants youths who have the personal qualities which will enable them to contribute to and profit by the broad program of work and training. Even though an applicant may meet all the legal requirements for admission to the Corps and even though the financial need of the applicant himself or his family may be great, it is obviously undesirable to select the applicant who is (1) not likely to stay in the Corps for a six months' period of enrollment, or (2) not likely to do his share of work, or to profit by the experience and training available in the Corps.

Qualitative selection is the second of three steps in the process of CCC selection. These steps are:

1. Determination of the facts of eligibility for all applicants. Does each meet every eligibility requirement?
2. Selection from the list of fully eligible applicants, of those youths whose personal abilities and qualities seem to indicate that they will (a) stay in the Corps for at least one full term of enrollment, and (b) contribute to and profit by the CCC work and training program.
3. Certification of fully eligible and personally qualified applicants in order of financial need (as indicated in "Standards of Eligibility").

The second of these two steps is of especial importance. It is the heart of the selection process. It requires the best efforts of every selecting agent. Enrollment in the CCC is a privilege for which youths must be carefully selected, not a haven of refuge for youths whose only qualification is destitution.

The need for judgment concerning the personal qualifications of applicants imposes responsibility upon selecting agents to develop skill in the process of selection. Following through the CCC career of each youth selected will help every selecting agent to see when he has made avoidable mistakes, and thus to know which youths are likely to succeed and which are not. This is not a field in which it is ever possible to say that a perfect job has been done, but it is a field in which steady progress can be made and is being made by alert selecting agents in all parts of the country.

## Chapter X

### PRE-CAMP ORIENTATION

CCC officials, including selecting agents, have become accustomed to use the word orientation to describe the entire process whereby an inexperienced youth is assisted to accommodate his attitudes and his habits to CCC life so as to obtain the maximum benefits possible from his enrollment in the Corps. Pre-camp orientation applies to that part of the process of orientation which occurs before enrollment. It has come to be recognized as one of the very important responsibilities of the selecting agents.

Pre-camp orientation and counseling by the local selecting agent should provide each selected applicant with an understanding of:

The purposes of the Corps (i.e., importance of a Nation-wide program for conservation of land, water, forest and wildlife resources, the national interest in an employment and training program for youthful citizens, enrollees as participants in a purposeful, economically useful program of public work).

What will be expected of the enrollee in terms of the work program (i.e., number of hours of work on the project, necessity for working on Saturdays when there is inclement weather during the week, necessity for working more than the customary forty-hour week during emergencies, etc.). The applicants, when selected, should understand that they cannot leave camp whenever they so desire, merely because their day's work on the project is done, nor can they as a matter of right leave camp every week end. They are expected to regard the life of the camp as being on a 24-hour-a-day basis.

The opportunities of the camp and work program. It should be impressed upon each selected applicant that there are in every camp, in connection with the work project and camp administration, a sizeable number of opportunities to obtain basic training of general applicability to specify payroll jobs in industry and agriculture. At the outset it will probably be necessary for most new enrollees to engage in simple manual labor jobs of a non-technical nature. However, the normal turnover of enrollee personnel, as well as the two-year maximum service requirement, so operate that enrollees already occupying key positions leave the Corps from time to time. This makes openings for energetic and intelligent younger enrollees who merit jobs of increased responsibility and skill. Those elevated to the ratings of leadership, authorized by law, receive increases in their monthly cash allowances.

The advantages of making a good "work record" in the Corps. Such a record will stamp the enrollee as an outstanding member of his CCC company and will have important carry-over values as the enrollee later seeks private employment for which he is qualified.

The benefits to be derived from whole-hearted participation in the leisure time educational and recreational programs available in each camp.

The necessity for fitting individual desires and action to the interest of the larger group, and for abiding by camp rules and regulations which are established for the benefit of all enrollees.

The necessity to perform various "housekeeping duties" around the camp. This includes making beds, scrubbing barracks, cleaning up the camp ground, and other similar tasks. Each enrollee is expected to bear his share of this sort of work.

The oath of enrollment. The State Selecting Agency should furnish all local agents with a copy thereof. It may then be helpful for the local agent to discuss with each selected applicant the nature of the obligation which he will undertake as a member of the Corps.

The requirement of vaccination against smallpox and inoculation against typhoid fever immediately upon enrollment and the necessity for fingerprinting.

The desirability of remaining for the full six months' term and of obtaining an honorable discharge. The privilege of reenrollment based on a good record of service.

The regulations concerning discharge - especially in order to make sure that the applicant understands that he may receive an honorable discharge prior to expiration of term of enrollment only upon receipt of a verified offer of employment which will improve the enrollee's condition, or in unusual circumstances because of presence urgently needed elsewhere.

The impossibility of assuring any applicant that he will be sent to a particular camp, or that he will or will not be located at considerable distance from his home. Information that climate in distant locations may vary considerably from that to which the selectee has been accustomed.

#### Reaching the Families

The families of selectees should likewise be reached by the local selecting agent in order that they too will understand the requirements and opportunities of camp life. It is well recognized that the attitudes and influence of the families of new enrollees are often major factors in determining whether camp adjustment will be readily and satisfactorily accomplished.

It is apparent that pre-camp orientation is part and parcel of the entire selection process. The provision of accurate information to the general public and especially to selected applicants, the application

itself, the interview with each applicant, the home visit, or the interview with the parents of the applicant: these are all opportunities for pre-camp orientation.

### Pre-Camp Orientation Meetings

Experience has demonstrated that it is very valuable to give to each applicant who is finally selected a more systematic and specific period of counseling a few days in advance of the date set for his examination and acceptance. This may be done either by individual counseling with applicants or through the medium of group meetings. Because of the significant success of group meetings in various parts of the country, a description of them is included here.

The most successful pre-camp orientation meetings sponsored by selecting agents have been cooperative enterprises. They may be held in school buildings or other similarly suitable places. They occur just before or just at the beginning of each quarterly enrollment period - at least several days before the date set for sending the young men forward for examination and acceptance into the Corps. The meeting is specifically designed for applicants and their families. There is good reason, however, why friends or other interested individuals should also attend.

The selecting agent acts as chairman. If there is a CCC camp nearby, the Camp Commander, the Educational Adviser and the Project Superintendent are all invited to make talks to the selected applicants and their parents about the nature of camp life, the kind of work to be done, the jobs that enrollees do, the educational and other opportunities available, and the rules and regulations under which a CCC camp operates. The selecting agent usually summarizes these factors and indicates what the local community expects of the young men who are about to enter the CCC.

Frequently, no CCC camps are close to a local selecting agency and no CCC officials are available to appear before such groups. In that case the local selecting agent becomes personally well acquainted with the nature and work of CCC camps and is able to give an appropriate talk on this subject. The selecting agent then invites an able and (if possible) prominent local citizen to talk to the selected applicants, indicating that they are the representatives of that local community and that he hopes that the youths will uphold a high standard of performance in the Corps.

The stimulus of such meetings to youths about to leave for camp is always good. It is believed from trial and observation that this process considerably reduces the bad consequences of homesickness and cuts down actual desertion cases. Since the greatest number of desertions occur within a few days or weeks after enrollment, it is obviously important to do everything possible to facilitate the adjustment of enrollees to camp life. This is certainly one very effective means.

Selecting agents who have organized group meetings of this kind have found it to be desirable to postpone the final certification of applicants until after the meeting is over. It is clearly explained that any applicant who did not understand the CCC program and who thinks that it is not exactly what he wants, may, without any reflection upon him whatsoever withdraw his application. Experience has indicated that some applicants do withdraw. Thus, they themselves safeguard against possible desertions from the Corps. When the selecting agent fosters such a thorough understanding among applicants of the purposes and nature of the CCC that those who would be unsuited to the Corps voluntarily eliminate themselves, he can rightly feel that he is doing a good job.

## Chapter XI

### PHYSICAL EXAMINATION AND ACCEPTANCE

When applicants have been finally selected and certified and have been given a thorough understanding of the nature and purposes of the Corps, they are sent forward to designated points for official physical examination. If they pass the physical examination, they are accepted for enrollment in the Corps.

#### Principals and Alternates

Since there is always the possibility that some of the selectees will not pass the physical examination, the local selecting agent is normally instructed by the State Selecting Agency to send forward a larger number of qualified youths than the official number to be accepted (the requisition for replacements). Thus, the surplus selectees are a reserve to assure that all vacancies will be filled without having to repeat the acceptance operations on a later date. The selectees who are to be given preference and who are definitely expected to go to camp if they pass the physical examination are called principal selectees; those who are present to fill any vacancies caused by failure to pass the physical examination are called alternates.

Qualified applicants who are selected as alternates should understand that they will have a chance to be enrolled at that time only if principal selectees fail to pass the physical examination. They should not gain any misapprehension of their likelihood of going to camp.

#### Starting Off to Camp

For the applicants who have been selected, the act of traveling to the point at which the physical examinations are to be given (which are in some cases CCC camps and in other cases centrally located public buildings) is a dramatic and thrilling experience. The youths are "on their way" to camp; they do not expect to return home for some time. Many are nervous and excited. Under such circumstances, it is highly desirable that the selecting agent or a capable representative should accompany the selected youths to the point of examination and acceptance. Such a policy has at least four values:

1. To keep the boys reasonably calm and well behaved; to prevent any of them from allowing their excitement to cause them to engage in rash or dangerous "pranks."
2. To be in touch with the CCC acceptance officers and physicians as the official representative of the State Selecting Agency; to clarify the eligibility of any selectee, in the event it is called into question.

3. To become better acquainted with other CCC officials and CCC procedures.
4. To counsel with youths who are rejected for physical reasons; to discuss their cases with the CCC physician; to interpret to them immediately the reasons for rejection, and the means by which their physical defects may be corrected.

The first three paragraphs above are largely self-explanatory. Yet it is desirable for selecting agents, as representatives of the State and National selecting organization of the Corps, to take with them to the points of examination and acceptance copy of the official CCC booklet "Standards of Eligibility and Selection for Junior Enrollees" (with any changes which may have been issued properly inserted or securely attached). This booklet may be helpful in the event any question arises concerning the rules and regulations governing selection.

#### Rejected Applicants

Counseling with youths who have been rejected for physical reasons and the development of definite procedure for aiding such youths is of sufficient importance to deserve special comment. Inexperienced and immature as most of them are, the applicants who fail to pass the CCC physical examination are frequently shocked and disappointed to a greater degree than is often realized. Their hopes were high for starting off their careers as men. Suddenly those hopes are dashed to the ground. Some times they have no understanding of their ailments or what needs to be done to correct them. They suffer the dual agony of keen disappointment at losing an opportunity that was almost in their grasp, and of fear of the future, arising from a lack of knowledge about their physical defects. Their disappointment and anxiety genuinely require immediate and sympathetic attention.

Counseling with the rejected youths about their difficulties is the first necessity to alleviate mental distress. Ordinarily such counseling takes the form of indicating what steps may be taken to cure or correct the condition. Frequently the selecting agent secures the sympathetic help of the CCC examining doctors in counseling with the rejected applicants, indicating in many instances what the remedial treatment is likely to consist of and how long it will take to effect a cure. Many times, too, selecting agents stress the fortunate circumstance that the youth got this early and free opportunity to find out about a difficulty which might have become more serious if it had been allowed to go untreated for a long period of time.

#### Medical Treatment

Fortunately, the development of specific procedures for helping youths who have failed to pass the physical examination usually dovetails into the other welfare responsibilities of organizations which

act as CCC selecting agencies. Arrangements for remedial treatment vary widely from community to community. Some of the methods which are used are as follows:

Medical service under State or county welfare program: In many localities there are public welfare funds available for necessary remedial treatment of needy persons.

State and county health departments; district and county nurses: In certain kinds of cases, such as venereal diseases, free or inexpensive treatment is often afforded to anyone through cooperation with State and county health authorities.

Hospitals, clinics: There are many provisions in public and private hospitals and clinics for the treatment of those who cannot afford to pay any, or more than a small proportion, of the cost of the medical care they receive.

Private physicians, surgeons, and dentists: Private doctors will frequently treat young men whose families have exhausted their resources.

The resourceful selecting agent will find some means of helping the CCC applicants who are afflicted with physical imperfections. In almost every community the means exist; it is a challenge to the selecting agent to find them and to see that they are put to use.

## Chapter XII

### RELATIONSHIP TO ENROLLEES IN CAMP

When a youth goes to camp, he should not feel that he has severed connections with his home community. Selecting agents throughout the country are instrumental in making each youth feel that the selecting agency still retains a real interest in him and remains the official link between his CCC camp and the community from which he comes. If matters arise during his enrollment concerning which the enrollee feels that his interests in his home community are not being properly looked out for, the selecting agent is the logical person to whom to turn. The selecting agent's work properly includes the provision of service functions while enrollees are in camp.

#### Continued Orientation and Adjustment

Many selecting agents have had success with various types of written messages which are designed to aid new enrollees to become adjusted to camp and to alleviate homesickness. Examples of these follow:

The selecting agent in one community obtained a supply of double post cards (reply cards) and divided them into two groups. The first group was sent to the parents of the new enrollees, and the second group was sent to the enrollees themselves. Each was asked to detach the unused card and send it to his boy in camp or to his parents at home with a cheerful message written on it. The addresses of the boys in camp were provided to the parents. This was done a few days after the boys had been enrolled. A check-up later revealed that everyone concerned thought that this procedure helped to reduce homesickness greatly.

In another community, the selecting agent personally composed a "newsy" letter which was mimeographed and mailed to each of the youths a few days after they had left for camp. The enrollees who received this letter felt that they had not lost contact with their home community and were buoyed up by the letter. This, too, was found to be a most helpful way of bridging over the first few days and weeks of enrollment - the most difficult period for almost every youth.

Many camp commanders say, "If I can hold a boy for the first two weeks or the first month, I can keep him for six months or a year without any trouble." The selecting agent can greatly aid camp officials, by such methods as those listed above, to hold their enrollees for the first two weeks or the first month.

Some local selecting agents can actually visit the nearby camps to which their boys are sent. In one western camp, the selecting agent has been asked to meet regularly with the camp educational committee.

### Adjustment of Allotment Arrangements during Enrollment

As all selecting agents recognize, it is important for the success of enrollees in camp that the allotment payments from their wages should be as continuously satisfactory to them as it is possible, under law and regulation, to make them. When circumstances change, therefore, during the enrollment of a youth, it is frequently possible and desirable for a selecting agent to help adjust the allotment arrangements.

Specific procedures for changes of allotment are made available to local selecting agents by each State Selecting Agency. These are based upon certain well-understood principles to be followed by CCC camp commanders and by other CCC officials concerned.

One principle is worthy of special notation. The total monthly allowance of every properly qualified enrollee is earned by him in camp. The allotment to the dependent of the enrollee is, in consequence, a part of his earnings. It is proper that he should regard it so. In making investigation and recommendation for change of allotment caused by change of circumstances, therefore, the selecting agent should give primary consideration to the reasonable desires of the youths. If there is any way to avoid it, under law and regulation, enrollees should not be placed in the position of being compelled to make an allotment to a person of whom they disapprove. Obviously, however, enrollees should not be permitted to change their allotments merely for the purpose of having the allotment money returned to them in camp.

### Enrollees Absent Without Leave

The selecting agent can often be persuasive in explaining to an enrollee who is AWOL that he should, in fairness to himself, return to camp. This action is particularly effective in the case of new enrollees who have come home a short time after enrollment because of homesickness. After they have seen their parents and spent a night at home, they often begin to wish that they had had "enough nerve to stick it out."

When the selecting agent is able to pay a visit to the home of the boy or to send a representative to do so, it often throws enough weight in the scales to persuade him to go back to camp. Under ordinary circumstances, a new enrollee who becomes homesick and returns to his

home is fearful that he has disgraced himself in the eyes of the camp commander and that he would not be welcome if he returned. This should be discussed, and the proper explanation made to the enrollee.

#### Verification of Offers of Employment to Enrollees

Selecting agents are frequently called upon to verify reported offers of employment for enrollees in the Corps. The verification of such employment is important to CCC administration. If no verification were made, youths could and undoubtedly would contrive to obtain an honorable discharge, on the plea of available employment, at any time they so wished. This is obviously undesirable. Enrollees who receive genuine and unusual employment offers should, however, have the privilege of accepting them. If, because of a selecting agent's failure to make a verification, an enrollee were to receive an unsatisfactory discharge, it is possible that the youth would suffer considerable undue hardship in subsequent failure to keep or find other suitable employment in view of that unsatisfactory CCC discharge. It is a matter of considerable importance, therefore, that selecting agents should complete necessary verification of reported offers of employment for enrollees whom they have selected and sponsored.

Contact with enrollees while they are in camp is an integral part of the selecting agent's job. As was indicated in Chapter I, sustained interest in the progress of men whom it has selected is part of the job of every personnel department.

## Chapter XIII

### POST-CAMP GUIDANCE

#### Returning Enrollees

When CCC youths return from camp to their home communities, on their own initiative they frequently visit again the agency which selected them. Many have left the Corps at the end of one or two terms of enrollment without having located other employment. They return with high hopes of finding employment, but with no definite offers of jobs. They visit the local selecting agency either to obtain guidance and suggestion or to report to the selecting agent upon their experience in camp.

#### Problem of Readjustment

The CCC selecting agent can often serve as the link between the camp and the home community of the CCC enrollee, just as in the original instance he served as the link between the home community and the camp. Enrollees who have been away for some time may have difficulty in readjusting themselves to their home communities. For a period, their time and attention have been fully occupied. In their home communities they may be temporarily unemployed. Idle, they may quickly lose that self-assurance and pleasant demeanor which come with being fully and usefully occupied.

#### No Paternalism

The opportunity and responsibility of the selecting agent is not that of finding jobs for these youths. No course of action should be followed which extends and increases the dependency of a youth upon the selecting agent. Rather, there should be the policy of skillful questioning directed toward the purpose of getting the youth to see for himself what avenues of job-seeking and other activity are open to him and interesting to him.

#### Referral to Employment Service

As a counsellor, the selecting agent can ask such questions as will make the applicant realize and often express in his own words the course of action which he should follow. Usually that course of action would involve registration or re-registration at the nearest office of the State Employment Service. Many public employment offices give special attention to interviewing and placing "juniors" who have had a limited amount of work experience. To an increasing extent, furthermore, all public employment officials are realizing the important training and experience gained by ambitious young men who have served one or more full six-months terms of enrollment in the Civilian Conservation Corps. If selecting agents are in close and

frequent contact with officials of the local employment office, very effective working relationships can be developed to the great benefit of these youths. Such cooperation is already achieving fine results in a number of States.

#### Other Resources

In some instances the selecting agent may suggest means by which the former CCC enrollee may take further vocational training, either in the daytime or at night. In other cases the youth would profit most by securing NYA "student-aid" to continue his education. Selecting agents have also suggested that youths volunteer their services for perhaps half time in various sorts of enterprises, usually of a public nature, while they spend the other half looking for work. By this process their morale has been at least partially maintained even though they did not receive any income.

#### Hopeful Outlook

The readjustment of enrollees to their home communities is, to many selecting agents, almost as important a transition step as the original adjustment to camp, and one in which they have just as legitimate an interest. In a number of places, selecting agents have pursued the policy of requesting discharged enrollees to come in to see them, in order that they may discuss their CCC experience. This policy has the effect of making the enrollees feel that their CCC enrollment was terminated in a very friendly way, and with a hopeful outlook toward the future.

## Chapter XIV

### EVALUATION OF METHODS AND RESULTS

#### Strategic Place of the Selecting Agent

No group of individuals is in more fortunate and advantageous position to observe the human values resulting from CCC experience than selecting agents. They see the youth in the local community before leaving for camp; they frequently see him after he returns from camp. The contrast between the boy who went away and the young man who came back becomes at once a means of evaluating two things: the judgment of the selecting agent in sending that boy to camp, and the benefit or lack of benefit derived by the enrollee from his camp experience. The two fit together and are inseparable.

#### Methods of Evaluation

Evaluation may be achieved by two processes, or by combination of the two. In the first place, it may be achieved by personal observation of the progress made by enrollees of the Corps to find out whether they have lived up to the expectations of the selecting agent. Instinctively, most selecting agents make an estimate of each applicant at the time he is being considered for enrollment in the Corps. The selection of each applicant is properly based upon the conviction that he has the potentialities for success in the Corps. When an enrollee returns from camp, therefore, it is natural that the selecting agent who is concerned with testing his estimates and improving his own selection process will wish to talk again with each youth. He will seek to determine whether he made an avoidable mistake in those cases where an enrollee did not adjust himself to camp life, or whether that failure to adjust was due to some unforeseeable situation in camp.

#### Follow-Up Interview

Follow-up interview, even though very brief, is ordinarily the very best means of evaluation. Usually such follow-up interviews can be most helpful if they are conducted by the same person who made the original interview in advance of selection. Questions designed to elicit information about the work done by the youth in camp; the things he found most interesting; training courses in which he participated; leadership ratings received; attitude toward work; methods of occupying leisure time: these are some of the subjects which many selecting agents discuss with former enrollees at the time of follow-up interviews.

As can readily be seen, such follow-up interviewing can be most effective and useful if the local agent has before him some written notations concerning his judgment of the youth at the time of his selection and certification. If, for example, a selecting agent can

take out of the files a statement indicating that a particular youth seemed extremely discouraged, almost to the point of hopelessness, and have that statement in front of him a year later when he interviews a self-assured ambitious young man, just having received an honorable discharge, it is much easier to record a positive evaluation than as if the selecting agent had to depend upon memory to make such comparisons. Similarly, if the selecting agent has a record in front of him which indicates that at the time of selection Steve Brown was intensely interested in radio and that three months later Steve Brown deserted from camp, this original fact may have an important bearing upon Steve Brown's desertion. Perhaps the selecting agent will discover that he should not have permitted Steve Brown to go to camp, in view of the impossibility of promising him any good opportunity for studying radio. Perhaps Steve Brown should have gotten some NYA "student-aid" and continued his schooling at the Technical High School. These are some of the evaluative factors which can be explored by the selecting agent - especially if good records of interviews are kept.

### Statistical Measurement

A second kind of evaluation is of a more general character. Records of rates of honorable discharge, classification of those discharges according to various factors, such as camp location, age of enrollees, previous schooling of enrollees - these and others are methods of attempting to arrive at more and more clues which will help the selecting agent to improve the selection process.

### Conclusion

As is indicated at the outset of this book, every selecting agent must develop his own selection process. There is no single method of determining which youths will contribute most to and profit most from the program of work and training which the Corps offers. There is clear evidence to indicate, however, that when selecting agents systematically attempt to improve their methods, there is noticeable and measurable improvement in the success of the enrollees they select for the Corps.

Each selecting agent can add something to the professional body of knowledge about selection and in so doing can benefit both the Civilian Conservation Corps as an organization and most of all the youths who, through their enrollment in the Corps, mature into responsible young men.



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